



## TWO NEW CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

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## County of San Diego - Parks and Open Space Program

*Contributing to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan Environment Initiative*

*"Promote natural resource management strategies that ensure environmental preservation, quality of life, and economic development"*

## TOM OBERBAUER NAMED NEW CHIEF OF THE COUNTY MSCP

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## LARGEST FIRE IN THE HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA STRIKES SAN DIEGO COUNTY



The recent Cedar, Paradise and Otay fires took the lives and homes of loved ones and impacted hundreds of thousands of acres of open space in the County.

Fire management and attack plans are being prepared by the Federal, State and County and City governments that will be used in to prevent another catastrophic fire. We have been working closely with representatives from several Federal, State and local agencies to develop appropriate fire-safety standards for clearing and other defensive design criteria. Current MSCP clearing requirements are explained on page 4 of this issue. We will publish results of these efforts in future issues of the *MSCP News*.

*Cedar Fire, October 2003*

San Diego residents and the MSCP will persevere through this historic event. The residents, flora and fauna of San Diego County are survivors – their communities will re-establish and thrive. You can view comprehensive information on the recent fires at [http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/enterprise\\_portal/announcements/san\\_diego\\_county\\_fires.htm](http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/enterprise_portal/announcements/san_diego_county_fires.htm).



## TIERRA MIGUEL FOUNDATION AWARDED \$1.9 MILLION



*Tierra Miguel Farm: Photo Tierra Miguel Foundation*

The Tierra Miguel Foundation and the Fallbrook Land Conservancy, with state and federal funding totaling \$1.9 million, have created a first-of-its-kind agricultural conservation easement in northern San Diego County.

"We're very happy to be able to permanently preserve this beautiful Pauma Valley land for agriculture," said Charlene Orszag, president of the not-for-profit Tierra Miguel Foundation. "This project is a great example of how local organizations can work with the state and federal government to make a difference."

The Tierra Miguel Foundation (TMF) farm is an educational demonstration farm that offers a hands-on opportunity for youngsters and other interested parties to learn about sustainable organic agriculture. The farm supplies boxes of farm produce for classroom learning programs and distributes its seasonal products to 300 Community Supported Agriculture participants in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Diego counties. Community Supported Agriculture is a way the public can directly support a small, local farm while getting a weekly supply of fresh, organically grown products. TMF also offers numerous educational outreach and research programs to promote sustainable agriculture. The 85-acre farm has prime soils, a reliable water source, and is located in an agricultural area that is faced with increasing development pressure from the high demand for residential estate homes in the Pauma Valley. Under the terms of the easement, no non-agricultural development may take place on the farm, which currently is owned by Pauma Valley Ranch, LLC. This project is the first fee title grant by the California Farmland Conservancy Program and the first agricultural conservation easement grant funded by both California and federal programs in the state south of Santa Barbara County. *Continued on Page 3*

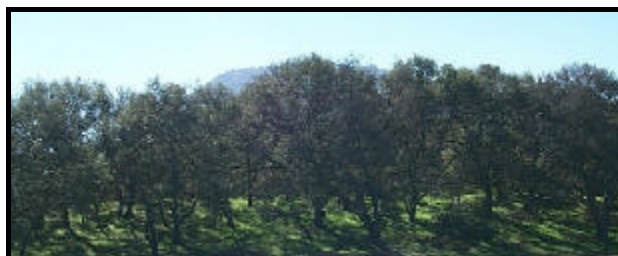
**RANGELAND, GRAZING LAND AND GRASSLAND PROTECTION ACT OF 2002***Ramona Grasslands: MSCP Photo*

In September of 2002, Chapter 984, Statutes of 2002, enacted the Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Act of 2002. The Act designated the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) as the lead agency for carrying out the California Rangeland, Grazing Land and Grassland Protection Program. The purpose of the program is to protect California's rangeland, grazing land and grasslands through the use of conservation easements. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 10332, the purpose of the program is to accomplish the following: prevent the conversion of rangeland, grazing land and grassland to nonagricultural uses; protect the long-term sustainability of livestock grazing; and ensure continued wildlife, water quality, watershed and open-space benefits to the State of California from livestock grazing.

Projects must protect the integrity of the rangeland, grazing lands and grasslands. Applicants interested in obtaining an easement on more intensified agricultural areas are encouraged to contact the Department of Conservation (DOC), California Farmland Conservancy Program or visit their website at [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cfcp/index.htm](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cfcp/index.htm). The WCB will assist applicants interested in obtaining funding information from the different agricultural protection programs. Eligible applicants and partners include a willing landowner, a local public agency, special district, resource conservation district, joint powers authority, nonprofit organization or state agency. Applications will be accepted on a year-round basis. To qualify for funding, applications must be submitted at least four months in advance of the scheduled Board meeting. Applicants are encouraged to call (916) 445-8448, with any questions prior to completing an application package or by visiting the Board's website located at [www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb).

**THE OAK WOODLANDS CONSERVATION ACT**

An innovative effort called the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Program, enacted by Chapter 588, Statutes of 2001 has recently been implemented. The Act recognizes the importance of California's oak woodlands, how they enhance the natural and scenic beauty of this great State, the critical role of the private landowner and the importance of private land stewardship. The Act further acknowledges how oak woodlands increase the monetary and ecological value of real property and promote ecological balance.

*Black Oak Forest: MSCP Photo*

Oak woodlands provide habitat for more than 300 species of wildlife, moderate temperature extremes, reduce soil erosion and sustain water quality. Moreover, oak woodlands facilitate nutrient cycling and provide forage for numerous wildlife species. The oak tree has played such an important role in California history that one only has to travel a few miles to find a town, city or residential complex named after the majestic oak tree. Approximately two-thirds or 10 million acres of California's oak woodlands remain intact, about 80 percent of which are found on private property. Of the remaining oak woodlands, only about 4 percent are protected from conversion. Because the preponderance of remaining oak woodlands can be found on privately owned property, the California Oak Woodlands Conservation Program is designed to accommodate the needs of the private landowner while fostering protection for oak woodlands.

The Oak Woodlands Conservation Program offers landowners, conservation organizations, cities and counties, an opportunity to obtain funding for projects designed to conserve and restore California's oak woodlands. While the Program is statewide in nature, it provides opportunities to address oak woodland issues on a regional priority basis. The Program is designed to help local efforts achieve oak woodland protection. More importantly, this Program provides a mechanism to bring ranchers and conservationists together in a manner that allows both to achieve that which is so valued: sustainable ranch and farming operations and healthy oak woodlands. More information on the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act can be found at the SCB website located at [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb/oak\\_woodland\\_program.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb/oak_woodland_program.html).





## TOM OBERBAUER NAMED CHIEF OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO MSCP



*Tom Oberbauer*

The County of San Diego is pleased to announce that Tom Oberbauer has been named Chief of the County of San Diego MSCP. Tom most recently served in the capacity of an Environmental Resource Manager with the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use. His primary responsibilities included the preparation and management of regional open space systems under the MSCP. Tom has worked for the County for 25 years involving the review of potential environmental impacts from general plan changes and identification of sensitive resources. Mr. Oberbauer worked on the creation of the MSCP Plan for the southwestern portion of San Diego County and its adoption in October 1997. He currently is leading the preparation of an MSCP Subarea Plan for the unincorporated portion of northwestern San Diego County. The County is thrilled to have Tom on its team and is confident that many MSCP goals will be accomplished under his leadership. His interests include San Diego County biological resources and biodiversity and botanical resources of the California Channel Islands and Baja California.

*Tierra Miguel Foundation (Continued from Page 1)*



Through the California Farmland Conservancy Program, the Department of Conservation will temporarily grant \$1.4 million to TMF to purchase the fee title to the property and approximately \$240,000 to place an easement on the farm, which the Foundation leases. "Agriculture probably isn't the first thing people think of when San Diego County is mentioned, but it's one of the most productive counties in the state," DOC Director Darryl Young noted. "We hope this project encourages more efforts to protect the county's farmland."

The USDA, through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, has agreed to fund approximately \$240,000 towards the purchase of the agricultural conservation easement. "As California's population grows by nearly 15 million over the next 20 years, preserving farmland will become a major challenge," said NRCS State Conservationist Chuck Bell. "Farmland is a vital and irreplaceable natural resource."

The California Farmland Conservancy Program, administered by DOC's Division of Land Resource Protection, is designed to ensure that the state's most valuable farmland will not be developed. Through the program, local governments and non-profit organizations can receive grants to purchase development rights from willing landowners, thus creating permanent conservation easements. CFCP funds remain for new grant proposals. Landowners and trusts are encouraged to visit [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp) for details.

The NRCS Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, NRCS partners with state, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. NRCS provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value. Tierra Miguel Foundation contact: Charlene Orszag, President (760) 742-1151.



### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### NORTH COUNTY MSCP SUBAREA PLAN WORKSHOPS POSTPONED

County staff is currently addressing the immediate needs of the victims of the recent catastrophic fires. Therefore, we appreciate your understanding that the North County MSCP workshops previously scheduled for November 3, 5 and 20 were postponed until after January 1, 2004. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you. The North County MSCP planning workshops will be rescheduled and noticed after January 1, 2004 at which time you will have an opportunity to provide us with your comments.

#### CONSERVATION AND WORKING LANDSCAPES WORKSHOP: PLANNING CONCEPTS IN NORTHERN SAN DIEGO AND THEIR EFFECT ON AGRICULTURE

This workshop has been rescheduled to January 27, 2004, 3:00 – 5:00 at the San Diego County Farm Bureau Office 1670 East Valley Parkway Escondido, CA 92027. Call Christine Brochard at (858) 694-3004 for more information, or visit the MSCP Portal website at [http://cosda102.co.san-diego.ca.us/pub\\_out/Oct29.htm](http://cosda102.co.san-diego.ca.us/pub_out/Oct29.htm).

**MSCP AND DEFENSIBLE SPACE FOR FIRE PURPOSES**

County Fire Marshals require the clearing of hazardous vegetation close to houses and buildings in the unincorporated area. However, citizens raise concerns as to whether these activities would be in violation of the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts. In response to these concerns, the County Fire Chief's Association and the Wildlife Agencies, (California Department of Fish & Game and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 1997. This MOU allows landowners to comply with the 100-foot clearing requirement without being subject to enforcement under the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts.

be cleared without any permit from the County—a form of exemption may be obtained at no cost at the zoning counter to document the clearing but is not required. For structures built after 1997 on parcels less than 10 acres in size, landowners may clear 2 or 5 acres depending on location within the MSCP. If the parcel is larger than 10 acres in size the 100-foot clearing provision applies.

Please contact the Department of Planning and Land Use, Zoning Information Counter, at (858) 565-5981 or 1-888-267-8770, California Department of Fish and Game at (858) 467-4201 and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (760) 431-9440 for more information.

Within the MSCP, if the parcel is 10 acres or smaller and a structure existed prior to Oct 1997, the entire parcel can

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Contributors: Trish Boaz, Tom Oberbauer, Christine Brochard and Jane Hendron (USFWS); Editor: Trish Boaz Credits Wildlife Conservation Board websites <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb/RangelandProgramRev3.htm#Purpose>; [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb/oak\\_woodland\\_program.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wcb/oak_woodland_program.html)

**Multiple Species Conservation Program**

County of San Diego  
Parks and Open Space Program  
Department of Planning and Land Use  
Department of Parks and Recreation  
5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B  
San Diego, CA 92123  
[www.mscp-sandiego.org](http://www.mscp-sandiego.org)

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